

Staff Shows Team Spirit on March Madness Walks

By Anya Armes Weber

The Wellness Committee thanks all staff who participated in last Friday's March Madness Walk.

"We appreciate the great participation from staff across the state who joined the Cabinet's Journey to Wellness by talking a walk together or on their own," said CHFS Wellness Committee Chairman Noel Harilson. "It was a great way to celebrate basketball season while we stepped up our exercise."

The walk also allowed staff to show their school spirit by wearing colors or gear that represent their favorite state college or university's basketball team.

The Wellness Committee sponsored a survey that asked participants to name their favorite team. The winners were the University of Kentucky Wildcats with 48 percent of the vote.

Second place honors go to the University of Louisville Cardinals, who got 26 percent of the vote. Western Kentucky University and Eastern Kentucky University were tied for third place with 5 percent each.

Look for the complete results of the vote [online](#).

Wellness Committee Vice Chairwoman Shannon Ramsey said she hopes the spring walk encouraged more staff to add physical activity to their daily routines.

"Regular exercise is vital to overall health," she said. "Becoming a Virgin HealthMiles member is an easy way to make sure you are getting enough physical activity."

Check out the [Virgin HealthMiles Web site](#) to learn more about the program.

Visit the [CHFS Wellness Web site](#) to learn more about how your healthy decisions can improve your well-being. E-mail [Kris Hayslett](#) or [Noel Harilson](#) for more information about other Cabinet wellness activities.

Justice, Mental Health Conference Set for May

An upcoming conference will focus on issues related to people with behavioral health issues who have had involvement with the justice system.

The Department for Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Addiction Services (MHDDAS) and the Northern Kentucky Criminal Justice/Behavioral Health Advisory Committee are hosting the "Recovery, Responsibility, Resiliency for Justice Involved Persons with Behavioral Health Disorders Conference" in May to bring together various agencies and professionals serving people with mental health needs.

The event will be May 4 and 5 at the Northern Kentucky Convention Center in Covington and will feature speakers on a variety of topics pertaining to behavioral health. Law enforcement, jailers, prosecutors, public defenders, the judiciary, corrections, probation and parole, academics, human services and paraprofessionals, as well as students, families and consumers are encouraged to attend.

No registration fee is required. Lunch and break refreshments will be provided. A variety of topics will be discussed to better understand and deliver services to people with challenging behaviors and their families, while also assuring public safety.

The conference is being made available through a grant awarded by the Health Foundation of Greater Cincinnati. A full conference brochure is located on the department's Web site at <http://mhmr.ky.gov/kdmhmrs/files/CJBHConference.pdf>.

For more information or questions about the conference, contact Ruggles at (502) 564-4456 or e-mail her at rita.ruggles@ky.gov.

Living Well: Step into Fitness

Are you looking for a low risk, easy and cheap way to become healthier? If you're looking for ways to developing a healthier lifestyle, the answer can be found in your daily life – walking. Studies have proven that a regular walking routine has the following benefits:

- Reduced blood cholesterol
- Lower blood pressure
- Increased cardiovascular endurance
- Increased bone strength
- Burns calories and assists with weight maintenance

A walking program is easy to set up and get started.

- Find comfortable shoes specifically designed for walking.
- Dress for the weather. In the winter, layers and moisture-wicking materials keep the dampness away from the body. The summer requires protection from both the heat and the sun, so lighter colors and sunscreen or protective clothing is advised.
- Start with short walks, then gradually increase your distance.
- Don't worry about speed. Walk at a comfortable pace so that you are able to talk normally and hold a conversation while walking. Also, focus on your posture by keeping your head lifted and your shoulders back.
- Maintain a natural arm swing and breathe deeply. If you feel as if you can't catch your breath, slow down and avoid hills.

After you have built a good base, try to challenge yourself by incorporating some of the following:

- Increase your distance.
- Add hills to your route.
- Work on lengthening your stride.
- Increase your speed.

The spring is a great time to start a walking program because the weather is warming up and the days are longer. As with any type of physical activity, be sure to include a warm-up session and a cool-down session followed by light stretches to maintain muscle flexibility and prevent muscle soreness. Tracking your routes, times, speeds and how you feel during each session will document your hard work as well as provide a guide for future workouts.

If you need extra motivation to increase your pace, try creating a playlist of music to listen to while you walk. Keep the volume low so that you can hear traffic or other people around you. If you can't walk after work, take advantage of your break time during the work day to get out and walk. Schedule walking breaks on your computer as a reminder to get away from your desk and move. The best workout routine is the one that keeps you walking and moving regularly.

Employee Enrichment

By Anya Armes Weber

Need some help selling your great idea to your boss? Here are some tips that might help you get to a "yes" from business writer Jerry Gleeson of the Journal News.

Test your idea by running it by teammates first. Tell them to be honest with their comments.

Arrange your presentation according to your boss' preferences. Know if he or she wants plenty of details or would rather hear the bottom line.

Be prepared for questions. Practice your answers and clarifications before you give your pitch.

Ask for feedback. Your supervisor will appreciate your asking, and his or her experience may help you do a better job.

If you get the green light, send your boss a written review of the steps you'll take to complete the project. He or she can use that to move forward and get any further approvals or assistance from other staff.

Be grateful. Thank your supervisor for the support, and consider sharing the credit for your great idea.